

Who Gets Grandpa's Farm? Considering Farm Succession Planning

Beginning with this issue, a farmer, rancher, or small farm specialist from a land-grant university; community-based organization; or federal, state, or local government will contribute the feature article. The guest author this issue is Dr. Sharon A. DeVaney, Purdue University.

Have you considered who will continue running your farm or ranch when you fully retire? How can the next generation of farmers be helped to enter today's challenging farming business climate?

In a study funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and the National Endowment for Financial Education, Sharon DeVaney, a retirement planning specialist at Purdue University, asked 40 farmers and their spouses throughout America about their future plans.

DeVaney sought to better understand the processes involved in retirement and succession planning of farm families. What she learned can help service providers design the kind of information farmers and ranchers need to help them plan for farm succession and retirement.

She found that both younger and older farmers will readily tell you about something *new* that they are going to try. What you are less likely to hear from an older farmer are his thoughts about retirement.

Many older farmers say they don't know what they would do with their time if they quit farming. Some farmers believe that they cannot afford to quit

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The late Captain John Ogonowski (right), pilot of American Airlines Flight 11, which was forced by terrorist hijackers to crash into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, welcomes two members of the Lowell, MA, Cambodian community to his farm last year. Ogonowski served as a mentor farmer to immigrant Cambodian farmers by providing them with land, equipment, and technical assistance. — PHOTO BY NEW ENTRY SUSTAINABLE FARMING PROJECT.

Your Small Farm Neighbor American Hero John Ogonowski Dracut, Massachusetts

Many unsung farmer heroes quietly go about the business of producing the world's food and fiber. One such American hero came to the public's attention on September 11, 2001, when the United States was attacked by al Qaeda terrorists.

That day, beginning farmers and farmland preservationists lost a champion and friend when Captain John Ogonowski, the senior pilot on American Airlines Flight 11, lost his life, along with all passengers aboard, when armed hijackers crashed his plane into the World Trade Center.

A fourth-generation farmer and community leader, Captain Ogonowski

worked his 150-acre White Gate Farm outside Lowell, MA, when he was not flying 10 days a month for American Airlines.

He grew hay, pumpkins, and blueberries; was active on farming committees; and served as a USDA county official. He saved 50 acres of local farmland in Dracut, MA, from development by helping to found the Dracut Land Trust. He made the agricultural trust land available to immigrant Cambodian farmers as part of Massachusetts' New Entry Sustainable Farming Project (NESFP).

Tufts University is the lead agency for NESFP, which partners with many organizations, several community groups, and local farmers. The program works with established farmers willing to rent some of their farmland to program participants.

Under the program, Ogonowski served

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farming. Other farmers say they don't have someone to take over the farm or don't know how to get started on the road to farm transfer.

In her survey, DeVaney found that older farmers hardly ever mentioned leisure activities such as fishing, travel, or golf. A few mentioned doing part-time jobs, custom work, or helping neighbors when needed. In contrast, several spouses said they would like to retire and travel a little, preferably while they are still young enough to enjoy a trip to an exotic place like Hawaii.

However, farmers who had experienced a serious health problem said they were more willing to slow down a little. Some said that when they turned 50 they had "taken stock of their lives" and made some changes, such as reducing their work hours. Other farmers talked about getting started in farming with their father's help and how they wanted to do the same thing for their son or daughter.

Farmers reported making different types of adjustments to increase their cash flow and, they hoped, to save for the future. Many farmers and spouses work off the farm. Still other farmers have found entrepreneurial ways to provide income, such as selling produce from a roadside stand, raising horses, or running a pheasant hunting business.

Some farmers talked about making off-farm investments to help diversify their risk. One farmer said, "My dad told me when I was just starting that I should always invest half of what I made off the farm. For every dollar I had available to invest, I invested 50 cents off the farm, and those investments have paid off."

Farm Transfer. The importance of passing the farm to a family member is uppermost in the minds of many farm families. Many parents worry about whether their adult children would be happy if they took over the farm. Sometimes there are brothers and sisters who have to be included in the estate, and it doesn't seem as if there is going to be enough for everyone.

A discussion with attorneys who worked with farmers provided insight

into farm transfer. The attorneys said that the transfer process is a series of stages. The first stage is when the farmer and spouse reach a decision that they are ready to "let go."

The second stage in the transfer process is deciding who will take over the farm. Although in the survey a son was the most likely successor, some farmers said they were planning to transfer the farm to a daughter. However, other farmers said, "My daughter is settled with her life, and that means that I will sell this farm."

Key Element. The attorneys stressed the importance of good communications about the estate plan within the extended family. They advise everyone in the family to be present at the same time to hear about farm transfer plans. This information sharing should take place as soon as the plans are finalized.

Transferring the farm is often an emotional issue. Some farmers told stories about families who no longer communicate because of estate planning decisions. One farmer said, "I know a family that will never sit down for Thanksgiving dinner together again."

Another concern voiced in the survey was when older farmers refuse to allow capable sons in their 40s, 50s, or 60s to take over the management of the farm, so the son becomes discouraged and leaves. Or different opinions come up among father and children about how the farm should be run.

Other stories had a different twist. One family talked about seeing a neighbor who intended to write a will, but the neighbor never got around to it and died unexpectedly. Watching this happen had prompted that family to prepare their own estate plan.

Sources of Information. When farmers were asked where they got information about retirement and succession planning, they mentioned working with their accountant, extension agent, banker, insurance agent, or attorney. Farm magazines were mentioned as good sources of information. Some mentioned

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RETIREMENT PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- What is your life expectancy? Who do you need to provide for? Where are the services you will need as an elder?
- What do you want to do with your time? Would you like to work part-time, on or off the farm? Do you want to do volunteer work, help family members, enjoy your hobbies or what?
- Will you quit farming, farm on a smaller scale, sell the farm, move? Will you stay where you are? Should you move to a smaller home that is one-story, easier to care for, and near the services and activities that are important to you?
- How much income will you need in retirement? Study your expenses. What will change? What sources of income will you have in retirement?
- Are you contributing to Social Security now? Will you be eligible for Social Security benefits? When? Should you wait until you have reached full retirement age to draw benefits, or will you start drawing permanently reduced benefits earlier? Will Social Security benefits need to be supplemented by additional income?
- Do you have a farm transfer plan? Have you thought about your spouse's needs if you are the first to die? Have you talked to an attorney?
- Do you have other sources of retirement income? Have you worked off-farm and do you have an employer savings plan? An Individual Retirement Account? Other investments? Income from part-time work?
- Do you have health insurance coverage now? Can you continue it when you retire, or will it be too expensive? Do you have a dependent, such as a spouse or handicapped child or other elder? Have you investigated supplemental policies available to you in your state?
- Have you learned about Medicare and what it does and does not cover? How would you fund long-term care if you or your spouse need it? Have you investigated long-term care insurance? Do you have enough assets to protect yourself?
- What would happen if you become mentally incapacitated? Do you have a Durable Power of Attorney, Health Care Power of Attorney, or Living Will?
- Does your family know about your plans? Do they know where you keep important documents? Does your executor know about your plans?
- Have you identified a county extension agent, banker, lawyer, accountant, insurance agent, financial planner, or other expert in your community who can advise you about farm succession and retirement planning?

that older farmers in their community had been a role model for them.

Farmers also talked about obtaining information from sources on the Internet. Farmers mentioned the need for trustworthiness whenever they sought information. They often mentioned what they had learned over the years from their fathers, but many also mentioned the importance of their mother's advice.

Some farmers have access to programs on beginning and exiting farming through the land-grant university or other college in their state. They mentioned the importance of getting new ideas and talking things over with farm advisors and other farm families.

Parents with a son who was beginning farming said, "We need advice on estate planning to get us started, but we need to hear it again in a couple of years when we have thought more about it."

The positive results of having regular farm business meetings were often mentioned. Farm families spoke about the role that sons- and daughters-in-law should have in farm decisions. The consensus was that everyone should be kept informed. Extended members like daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, while they may lack direct farming knowledge, can contribute access to cash flow, health care, and a pension for farming spouses from off-farm jobs, which helps farm risk management.

Concerns about health care were frequently mentioned in the survey. Many families were learning about what would be included in Medicare coverage when they were eligible at age 65. In addition, some farmers and spouses were learning about supplemental coverage for Medicare, and they were also considering long-term care insurance.

DeVaney found that farmers in her sur-

vey were willing to talk about their plans for the future, but they hadn't given much thought as to when they would retire. The study showed that farmers need service providers to help them with information about improving cash flow, more effective inter-generational communication, developing new job skills to compete for off-farm employment, and planning for farm succession and retirement.

Farmers need to know the various retirement and farm transfer options that apply to their situations. In the meantime, they are still working to put the world's food supply on tables.

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RETIREMENT RESOURCES

- **Social Security Administration** (<http://www.ssa.gov> or 800-772-1213). You should apply for benefits 3 months before you want to start receiving them. To apply, you need: Social Security number, birth certificate, W-2 forms or self-employment tax return for the last year, and military discharge papers, if applicable. If your spouse is applying for benefits, you will need his or her birth certificate and Social Security number.
- **Medicare** (<http://www.medicare.gov> or 800-633-4227). Generally, a U.S. citizen or permanent resident is eligible for Medicare at age 65. Medicare has two parts. Part A is hospital insurance. Most people are eligible for Part A without paying any premiums. Part B helps pay for doctors, outpatient hospital care, and other medical services. In 2002, there is a premium for Part B of \$54 a month.
- **Benefits CheckUp** (<http://www.benefitscheckup.org>) is a free service that identifies federal and state assistance programs for older Americans. The National Council on Aging created this service.
- **Planning for a Secure Retirement** (<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/retirement>), developed at Purdue University, is a free site that has information on life expectancy calculators, estimating expenses in retirement, Social Security, Medicare, evaluating your employer retirement plan, starting an Individual Retirement Account, etc.
- **A Retirement Estimator for Farm Families** (<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/farmretirement>), also developed at Purdue University, is a free site to help farm families determine their financial ability to retire. Users are asked to enter information on assets and liabilities. Users can customize information to see the effect of different values. No information is stored when you exit the program.
- **Information on a New National Extension Initiative**, Financial Security in Later Life, partially funded by USDA/CSREES, is now available (<http://www.reeusda.gov/financialsecurity>). Targeting farm families as one audience, its educational programs focus on saving, investing, and planning long-term care and retirement. It includes a new retirement estimator for farm families developed by Purdue University faculty, as well as resources featured during a March 2002 conference.

AMERICAN HERO...CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

as a mentor farmer by providing land, equipment, and technical assistance to immigrant Cambodians with farming backgrounds, living in nearby Lowell.

Using Captain Ogonowski's farmland and nearby farmland that Ogonowski and neighbors put into the land trust, Cambodian farmers raised almost three dozen kinds of Asian vegetables.

"John Ogonowski recognized the mentoring program as an opportunity to help a worthy group of 12 beginning growers practice another kind of agriculture. He not only made farmland behind his home available, but White Gate Farm became the program's first all-commercial 'mentor farm' – a training site for these beginning growers," said Hugh Joseph, project director.

"In the Northeast, as throughout the U.S., we have always depended on immigrants to expand agriculture. As today's generation of farmers is aging and the farm succession issue is an increasing

worry, immigrants can play a major role in filling that growing gap and need.

"John was involved in every project activity involving his farm. He plowed, harrowed, and fertilized the land, excavated a pond as a water source, and set up an irrigation system and greenhouse for the immigrant farmers. He advised them on managing production, pest control, harvesting, and other production practices. He participated in steering committee meetings, rarely collected the land rents, and generously helped the growers out of his own pocket," says Joseph.

Most of the Cambodian farmer participants found niche markets for their fresh, high-quality vegetables, unfamiliar to the region but a staple food of the large Cambodian population living in Lowell. They were starting to send produce to high-end restaurants in New York City for top dollar when the tragedy struck.

"John Ogonowski's tragic death is a

loss to his family and Massachusetts farming," said Gus Schumacher, Jr., former USDA Under Secretary of Agriculture and co-founder of NEFSP.

"He was so committed to helping new immigrants from war-torn Asia to make a better life farming in America. How ironic it is that someone who worked so hard to help victims of terrorism should be brought down by an act of terrorism himself."

On November 16, 2001, the U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report renamed USDA's Farmer-to-Farmer Program in memory of John Ogonowski. The program provides voluntary technical assistance to farmers, farm groups, and agribusiness worldwide.

As a lasting tribute to this humble but great man, the Ogonowski family will preserve the farmland owned by John Ogonowski as open space, in keeping with his commitment to preserve farmland for future generations.

Beginning Farmer Programs

This article was developed from interviews with key Beginning Farmer Program Coordinators within the National Farm Transition Network and Ron Macher, farmer and editor of the Small Farm Today Magazine. Special thanks to Ron Macher; John Baker, Coordinator of the National Farm Transition Network; and Network participants Kathy Ruhf, New England Land-Link Program; Cathy Sheils, New York FarmLink Program; Deb Heleba, Land Link Vermont; and William P. Dickinson, Virginia FarmLink.

An aging farmer population and farm business succession is a worldwide problem.

"Twice as many farmers are over 65 years old as under 35," reports the New England Small Farm Institute. This demographic trend is affecting the nation's productive land base, its local economies, its rural landscapes, and its future food system.

New farmers need to enter farming at the same rate that retiring farmers are exiting to keep America's food production system strong. Yet structural changes in the economy, world market forces, rising land costs, commodity industry integration, and other factors make farming a complex business.

The decision to farm requires careful and deliberate planning. Purchasing a farm is not the only option for beginning farmers. Not all new farmers need to or should purchase real estate. There are other options.

Retiring farmers may have no heirs interested in taking over their farms or choose not to work with their relatives. Who will be America's future farmers?

Farm Transfer Programs. Through the National Farm Transition Network (NFTN), about 20 farm transfer programs across the country link aspiring farmers without land with exiting farmers. New farmers may want to apprentice with an

experienced farmer and/or lease or buy all or portions of farms from retiring farmers.

Beginning farmer programs in the land link network are widely placed in different kinds of public and private organizations. These programs provide new farmers with information on access to capital; production agriculture techniques; and business management, financial, land-use planning, and marketing education.

Such programs also provide referrals to professionals, such as attorneys, extension professionals, farm business management specialists, and accountants, to help with legal issues.

"Sufficient attention is not being paid to new and beginning farmers, which is a complex issue needing a team approach programmatically," says John Baker, an attorney and Coordinator of the National Farm Transition Network.

"Farmers are experts in crops and livestock. We need to provide the farm business succession plan educational piece for them. In addition, various loan programs developed in the 1950s need to be redesigned to meet the needs of today's entering farmers."

Beginning farmer programs first started in the late 1980s in response to the farm crisis at that time and the resulting exodus from farming. The Center for Rural Affairs in Nebraska, a non-governmental organization, created one of the first such programs, Land Link, which matched people who wanted to start farming with those who had farmland.

Programs in other states followed. Each is different and helps entering and exiting farmers identify resources.

Currently NFTN programs exist in Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin. Virginia is now forming a beginning farmer program.

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Illinois farmer and auctioneer David Schiver and his wife Bernie moved from the family farm to their nearby town. Schiver remains active in farming with his sons and serves on the city council. Letting his white beard grow for six months a year, he also delights area children by playing Santa Claus in local community events. Volunteering – natural to farmers who are civic-minded and neighbor-oriented – is as important to rural communities as formal Red Cross or Meals on Wheels programs are in urban settings. Volunteering helps elders who are transitioning into retirement feel connected to their communities. –

PHOTO BY BERNIE SCHIVER.

Farming as a Business. “The key to preserving farmland, which is a critical resource for the next generation of farmers, is preserving the farm business,” said William P. Dickinson, Assistant Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Virginia FarmLink Director.

“Developing an effective business relationship between a beginning farmer and an exiting farmer, which may involve long-term leases or opportunities to build equity, is probably the only way most young people can get into farming unless they already own the land.

“Virginia, like many other states, expects a very sizeable transfer of farmland within the next 15 years. Complicating the whole issue of farm succession planning and the need to generate income for the retiring farmer is the nature of farm business assets, most of which are fixed – like equipment, buildings, and livestock – and often must be liquidated to provide a retirement income stream.”

“Farm business succession planning is where the biggest need is among today’s exiting farmers and strategic business planning among entering farmers. The sooner the managerial control is transferred to the incoming farming generation, the more likely it is that the farm business will survive into one more generation,” advises Baker.

NFTN programs can acquaint farmers with farm succession planning strategies. These can include conservation easements that are proving important in many states as a farmland preservation tool. Conservation easements are legal agreements property owners make to restrict the development that takes place on their land.

Easements can be held by third parties, including land trusts, resource conservation districts, and government entities, to protect land used for agricultural, conservation, or historic purposes.

“Many beginning farmers are not in a position to buy a farm, as land prices have escalated,” says Kathy Ruhf, New England Land-Link Program. “They need other ways to get access to land and a return on their investment without owning property. Examples include non-ownership tenure models and farmer partnerships with land trusts and municipally held open space.”

“Easements and other ways to ensure the continuing affordability of land for entering farmers,” explains Ruhf, “are critical to ensure a continuing supply of new farmers. The purchase of development rights by land trusts or a government body so farmers can buy farmland based on its agricultural, rather than development value, works well in some cases.”

Easements can help transition the family farm to the next generation of operators. Land linking program staff can help identify conservation easement programs, many of which have grown dramatically during recent years.

Farmer Diversity. Who are these new and emerging beginning farmers? Depending on state and region of the country, the new farmer population is ethnically and regionally diverse, entrepreneurial, and engaged in a wide diversity of agricultural enterprises, production, and marketing approaches. Each has a different profile and differing needs to succeed in agriculture.

Increasingly they are within the ages of 20 to 60, and include Blacks, Hispanics, women, immigrants like Hmong and Cambodians, career changers, people choosing farming as a second career, and retirees wanting to enter farming.

“Service providers must understand the different needs, backgrounds, and objectives of beginning farmers – those farming for 10 years or less – and design customized programs,” says Ruhf, who is also chair of the USDA Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers.

“A career changer with little hands-on

farming experience needs different knowledge, skills, and resources from someone who came from a farming background originally but has been away from it for a while.”

“Most beginning farmers with marketing and computer skills fail because either they come from a non-farm background with little agriculture skills, or if they originally came from a farm background, they have forgotten much of what they once knew,” says Ron Macher, farmer and *Small Farm Today* Magazine editor. “This incoming group needs sustainable agricultural practices as part of their farming paradigm to help them succeed in their farm businesses.”

“Ability to manage people, markets, finances, and production – or partner to manage these resources – is what will make young farmers successful, not only production as in the past,” says Cathy Sheils, New York FarmLink Program.

“Access to land, credit/capital, markets, knowledge, and technical assistance is critical for entering farmers,” advises Ruhf. “It is also very important for economic developers to include the next generation of farmers into their population growth equation and link beginning farmers and farmland protection to rural economic development, business retention, and enhancement.”

NFTN programs can assist aspiring farmers to become aware of potential risks before they invest in a farming operation of their own, through information and resources that can help them transition to professional farming while conserving farmland.

To find out if there is a beginning farmer program in your state, access the National Farm Transition Network at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nftn>, or contact your State Small Farm Program Coordinator at <http://www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm>.

A wide range of resources is available to assist small farmers and ranchers and their communities. Readers wishing further information about the resources listed below are asked to contact the individuals or offices listed for each item.



PRINT MEDIA

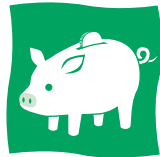
Beginning Farmer Resource Guide, by John Porter. Fact sheets with information keyed to small farmers across the Northeast region, often used as a template for similar guides in other states. Cost: \$7 including shipping out of state. In NH: free. To order, send a check or money order to UNH Cooperative Extension, UNH Publications, Nesmith Hall, 131 Main St., Durham, NH 03824.

Farm Savvy Manual, by attorney John Baker, Coordinator of the National Farm Transition Network, is a farm business succession planning manual. Cost: \$50 plus \$5 shipping. To order, write John Baker, Beginning Farmer Center, 10861 Douglas Avenue, Suite B, Urbandale, IA 50322, or phone 800-447-1985.

State Specific Farm Transfer and Beginning Farmer Resources is available from the National Farm Transition Network, which supports programs that foster the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Contact Director John Baker, National Network Coordinator, at phone 800-447-1985, or see <http://www.extnet.iastate.edu/Pages/bfc/national/homepage.html>.

Your Land Your Legacy: A Guide to Planning for the Future of Your Farm. This guide describes estate planning options and pitfalls involved in the transfer of land and business between generations, including basic estate planning strategies, conservation options, and approaches to keeping land available for the next generation of farmers. Cost: \$9.95 plus \$4.95 shipping, payable to American Farmland Trust, 1 Short Street, Northampton, MA 01060, or call 800-370-4879 to order.

Videos: "The Beginning Farmer," "Success Strategies for Your Agricultural Business," and "Young Farmers Success Stories." Cost: free loan. To borrow, write John Baker, Beginning Farmer Center, 10861 Douglas Avenue, Suite B, Urbandale, IA 50322, or phone 800-447-1985.



GRANTS, LOANS, TRAINING

American Farmland Trust, a private non-profit dedicated to preventing the loss of productive farmland and promoting farming practices that lead to a healthy environment, helps farmers, ranchers, and communities learn about farmland protection options and develop community farmland conservation programs. It provides effective education and policy-change programs on the local, state, and federal level. Call 800-431-1499, or visit <http://www.farmland.org> to learn more.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers direct and guaranteed loans to family-size farmers and targets a certain percentage of loan funds to eligible beginning farmers and ranchers. FSA also participates with state beginning farmer programs in providing joint financing to eligible beginning farmers and ranchers. It has entered into Memorandums of Understanding with 16 state beginning farmer programs. The federal/state programs can assist beginning farmers and ranchers to purchase land, farm equipment, and livestock, and to meet operating expense needs. For more information on FSA loan programs, contact your local FSA office (under USDA in your telephone book blue pages) or FSA's Farm Program Loan Making Division in Washington, DC (phone 202-720-1632; website <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>).

State Beginning Farmer Programs offer federal tax-exempt Agricultural (Aggie) bonds for beginning farmers and ranchers, which utilize a partnership between local banks and state bond issuers. Local banks receive federal tax-exempt interest income and pass the savings on to each beginning farmer or rancher at a reduced interest rate. For more information on Aggie Bond programs, contact the National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs in Springfield, IL, at phone 212782-5792.

National Farm Transition Network supports programs, services, and other resources that foster the next generation of farmers and ranchers. For information, contact John Baker, National Network Coordinator, at 800-447-1985 or access <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nftn/> for a listing of 20 programs and resources available across the country.

Farmland Protection Program (FPP). USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a voluntary program that helps farmers keep their land in agriculture. The program provides matching funds to state, local, or tribal government entities and non-governmental organizations with existing farmland protection programs to purchase conservation easements from landowners. Participating landowners retain all rights to use the property for agriculture, choose to keep their land in agriculture, and agree not to convert the land for nonagricultural use. All privately owned lands enrolled must have a conservation plan developed for highly erodible lands based on standards in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide. States, tribes, or local governments and non-governmental organizations that have existing farmland protection programs are eligible to apply for funding to appropriate NRCS state offices. A minimum of 30 years is required for conservation easements, and priority is given to applications with perpetual easements. Contact your state NRCS field office through your telephone blue pages, or contact Denise Coleman, National FPP Program Leader (telephone 202720-9476; e-mail denise.coleman@usda.gov; website <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>).

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps landowners protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property through the voluntary Wetlands Reserve Program. Eligible applicants can receive technical and financial support for their wetland restoration efforts. Landowners are offered three land enrollment options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements. Contact your state NRCS field office through your telephone blue pages, or contact Leslie Deavers, National WRP Program Leader (telephone 202720-3340; e-mail leslie.deavers@usda.gov; website <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>).

UPCOMING

EVENTS

| DATE | EVENT | LOCATION | CONTACT |
|----------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| July 11-14, 2002 | National Farm Transition Network Conference | Sonoma, CA | Steve Schwartz - 707-829-1691 info@californiafarmlink.org |
| Sept. 17-20, 2002 | 3 rd National Small Farm Conference | Albuquerque, NM | Edmund Gomez - 505-852-2668 |
| Oct. 23-26, 2002 | On the Road to Sustainable Agriculture SARE Rolling Conference | Raleigh, NC | Gwen Roland - 770-412-4786 groland@griffin.peachnet.edu |
| Oct. 31-Nov. 2, 2002 | Annual Small Farm Trade Show and Conference: "Thinking Outside the Box Sustainably" | Columbia, MO | Ron Macher - 800-633-2535 |
| Nov. 16-17, 2002 | Do You Know What It Takes? A New Farmer Conference | Cooperstown, NY | Zaid Kurdieh - 607-334-5841 or zik1@cornell.edu |

See Small Farm website (<http://www.reeusda.gov/smallfarm>) for the most up-to-date listing of events. We welcome submissions of events from our subscribers that would be of interest to the small farm community so that our Upcoming Events listing reflects a diversity of events from all regions of the country. Please

send submissions to Stephanie Olson, Editor, Small Farm Digest, CSREES, USDA, Mail Stop 2216, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250-2216 (phone: 202-401-6544; fax: 202-690-0289; e-mail solson@reeusda.gov).

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